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SENSITIVE
SIPDIS

E.O. 12958: N/A

TAGS: [PGOV](#) [PREL](#) [MW](#)

SUBJECT: TFGG01: EMBASSY PODGORICA ACTIVELY SUPPORTING USG PRIORITIES
ON GEORGIA-RUSSIA CONFLICT

REF: A.) STATE 87254; B.) PODGORICA 215

¶1. (SBU) Summary: The Embassy has aggressively pressed, privately and publicly, the USG message on the Georgia-Russia conflict. The Montenegrin Government has so far been largely silent on the issue, except for brief comments, by the Foreign Minister as a result of a meeting with the Ambassador. End summary.

¶2. (U) In addition to the DCM's demarche to the Deputy PM (Ref B), the Embassy has continued to promote heavily the U.S. messages on Georgia. In a prime time interview on the main national news program on August 22, the Ambassador highlighted NATO's role in sending clear messages to Russia, including that Moscow will not succeed in overthrowing the democratic government of Georgia and will not intimidate those countries which are striving towards membership in Euro-Atlantic institutions. The interview was picked up by several other TV stations and most print media the following day.

¶3. (U) In addition, on August 23, three dailies published the Georgia op-ed provided by EUR under the Ambassador's byline. Pro-Serbian daily "Dan" refused to publish the editorial and instead interviewed the Russian Ambassador to Montenegro the following day on the same topic. The Russian Ambassador reiterated Moscow's stance on the issue and accused the U.S. of having double standards regarding Kosovo and Georgia.

¶4. (SBU) During a meeting with FM Rocen on 8/20, the Ambassador and DCM pressed the GOM to support publicly the NATO FM's statement from the previous day. Rocen issued a statement after the meeting that Montenegro supports the efforts of all international institutions in implementing the peace agreement in Georgia. The GoM, however, has yet to release any other official statement on the conflict.

¶5. (SBU) Meanwhile the Serbian National Party (SNS) has been using the conflict as an excuse to attack NATO. Acting polcouns met with SNS VP Goran Danilovic on August 22 to discuss the SNS' inflammatory statements to the press in support of the Russian position (reftel B). Danilovic agreed that the comments had gone too far and promised to tone down the rhetoric, saying that "if it had been up to him, nothing would have been said publicly in the first place." He also noted, however, that the SNS would continue to support Russia's position.

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